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## 2024 to 2026 Business Plan & Budget

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### Information Technology

#### Prior Year Accomplishments

##### Innovate for Service Excellence

- Continued provision of excellent IT services for three member municipalities and one local police service through IT Managed Service agreements.
- Provided rapid response to cyber incident experienced by a Managed Service Partner and supported timely and effective resolution.
- Completed successful Cybersecurity Awareness Month Campaign roll-out to County staff, delivering in-person training to an initial 40 personnel, representing 15% of County device users, and reaching the majority of device users with awareness-raising materials. This included posters and pop-up banners in public-facing and staff areas at multiple County facilities, digital signage, e-newsletters, and an online trivia game. Externally, awareness activities included a month-long public social media campaign (that generated ), with referral to a dedicated webpage with cybersecurity tips and resources.
- As part of the Lean Green Belt certification program, partnered with the County's Tourism division to initiate an electronic records cleanup of the division's shared drives using Lean Green Belt principles. This initiative has resulted in a reduced number of files and folders on the shared drive, a more efficient folder structure for increased staff productivity, and the standardization of information management practices. Lessons learned will be applied to similar projects with additional departments in 2024 and beyond.
- Continued to provide records and information management training and consultation services for the organization, including facilitating physical and electronic records cleanups that resulted in the deletion of hundreds of gigabytes of data and the destruction of approximately 500 boxes of physical records, stimulating more efficient and productive operations.
- Delivered IT infrastructure upgrades for the County and Managed Service Partners, improving security through installations such as next generation firewalls, multi-factor authentication for logins, and enhanced server backup



technology, and enhancing productivity and efficiency through network and server infrastructure upgrades and laptop/desktop replacement.

### **Ignite Economic Opportunity**

- In alignment with the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan, investigated industry frameworks for benchmarking Northumberland County's readiness, and measuring progress in achieving, technology-enabled intentional, sustainable, inclusive growth. Based on dialogue with municipal leaders, Northumberland County has launched an initial community assessment based on the international Intelligent Community Forum framework.

### **Foster a Thriving Community**

- The Information Technology Department continues to expand the availability of digital services and implement technology-enabled solutions to address challenges and opportunities and improve service delivery for residents.
  - Adjusted IT infrastructure allocated to Golden Plough Lodge staff for enhancements in the resident admission process.
  - Modernized technology in Northumberland Paramedic ambulances, enabling the rollout of a solution connecting dispatch directly to mapping tools to support paramedic response times.
  - Rolled out virtual fax for Northumberland Paramedics' Community Paramedicine Program, enabling process flexibility and improved patient information security.

### **Propel Sustainable Growth**

- The Information Technology Department strives to ensure that backend technology supports are effective and sufficient to support ongoing organizational and community growth in a manner that is cost-effective, and value driven. Examples of 2023 accomplishments in this area include:
  - Network upgrades to improve performance and reliability.
  - Enhancement of backups to strengthen security posture and disaster recovery options.
  - Cybersecurity enhancements to further protect County infrastructure and data, including investments in enhanced email protection for key high impact cyber targets, and implementation of a 'zero-day' (immediate response) critical vulnerability patch management process.
  - Completion of an internal cybersecurity assessment and development of a related three-year plan.



- Continued planning of technology infrastructure components for the new Golden Plough Lodge and Northumberland County Archives and Museum.

### **Champion a Vibrant Future**

- Proactively built and maintained strong relationships with municipal and community partners to advance municipal goals, and drive new forms of value and advantage for the community, by:
  - Continuing to actively participate with Eastern Ontario municipalities in the Eastern Ontario Information Technology Collaborative (EOITC), which aligns with the Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus (EOWC), advancing priorities around cybersecurity, IT policy development, and broadband expansion.
  - Directing IT staff participation in the annual Municipal Information Systems Association (MISA) Infosec Conference focused on industry trends, knowledge-sharing, and best practices in municipal information security.
  - Engaging with the Intelligent Community Forum, a global network connecting municipalities for collaboration on the use of information and communications technology to build inclusive prosperity and enrich quality of life in a connected world.

## **2024 to 2026 Service Objectives & Initiatives**

### **Innovate for Service Excellence**

- Continue to explore opportunities for voluntary onboarding of additional lower-tier municipal partners to County IT Managed Services, enhancing efficiency between levels of government, increasing capacity, and improving services for residents.
- In 2024, pilot a new model of IT service delivery for Managed Service Partners, with newly onboarded Township of Alnwick/Haldimand. Shift from a dedicated single resource to deployment of County Service Desk Analysts (SDAs) to provide tier-one support for requests, managed through the IT Helpdesk, with escalation to more senior staff as required.
  - Use lessons learned from pilot with Township of Alnwick/Haldimand to initiate roll-out to all IT Managed Service Partners, enhancing service delivery to County staff and lower-tier municipal and agency partners.
- In 2025, action the Community Strategic Plan commitment to 'design a framework to maximize digital and data resources for efficient and effective service delivery' by developing an Information Management Strategy. This



strategy will enhance strategic governance and management of the County's information assets based on the industry standard 'Information Governance Maturity Model'.

- Deliver a minimum of one Lean Yellow or Green Belt project for improved department processes and operational efficiency.
- Enhance cybersecurity posture and proactive risk management with implementation of information and event logging infrastructure, ensuring rapid alert and response to potential cyber threat activity.
- Continue to roll out technology tools and information management processes to modernize the workplace and transform County lines of business, including Microsoft 365 and SharePoint.
- Revamp existing IT security policies and procedures to improve security maturity.
- Invest in next-generation Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based cybersecurity tools to safeguard the County's IT infrastructure & data from advanced cyberthreats.
- Continue roll-out of three-year program of cybersecurity training for County staff.

### **Ignite Economic Opportunity**

- Support roll-out of 'Broadband as a Utility' initiative to deliver high-speed internet access to all households and businesses across Northumberland, in partnership with private sector partners and with funding from the federal and provincial governments.
- Support creation of, and engage with, an internal working group to structure Northumberland County's pursuit of Intelligent Community certification, pursuing citizen-first economic, social, and cultural growth through technology, innovation, and community engagement in alignment with direction identified in the 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan.

### **Foster a Thriving Community**

- Continue to grow public awareness and resilience to cyber threats through promotion of cyber security information and e-learning resources available through the County website at [Northumberland.ca/CyberSafe](https://Northumberland.ca/CyberSafe).

### **Propel Sustainable Growth**

- Ensuring that technology keeps pace with the demands and expectations of County lines of business as well as opportunities as they present themselves, the Information Technology Department will continue to build a responsive, efficient and secure technology infrastructure. Internal initiatives to be pursued include:



- Continued modernization of business processes with an eye towards efficiency and effectiveness.
- Continued emphasis on securing the technology infrastructure in the organization.
- Continued adherence to a “state of good repair” and best practice for IT Infrastructure, including management of a formal Infrastructure Lifecycle Refresh Plan for the organization.
- Continued quality service delivery for IT Managed Service Partners in a fair and equitable manner.

### **Champion a Vibrant Future**

- Contribute to the digital mandate of the Ontario Health Team of Northumberland by engaging with the Digital Health Advisory Council to share industry knowledge and expertise and support advancement of Northumberland-based plans.
- Continue to actively participate in the Eastern Ontario Information Technology Collaborative (EOITC) on key municipal IT priorities.
- Ensure continued IT staff participation in Municipal Information Systems Association (MISA) workshops and conferences to ensure the team keeps abreast of industry trends and best practices in municipal information systems.
- Pursue ongoing engagement with the Intelligent Community Forum, strengthening relationships with municipal members and leveraging best practices for use of information and communications technology to build inclusive prosperity and enrich quality of life in Northumberland.

## **Long Term Plan & Strategic Objectives**

### **Innovate for Service Excellence**

- Create a more intelligent workplace by introducing and making use of new and innovative technologies and processes.
- Continue to provide, grow, and enhance the quality of IT Managed Services to promote a shared service approach.

### **Ignite Economic Opportunity**

- Use Intelligent Community pursuits and technology focus identified in 2023-2027 Community Strategic Plan as an investment vehicle to attract innovation-minded businesses and professionals.



### **Foster a Thriving Community**

- Ensure an effective omni-channel service delivery model for Northumberland County.
- Continue emphasis on community benefit from technology initiatives and enhancements.

### **Propel Sustainable Growth**

- Ensure that remote work technology solutions continue to meet the needs and requirements of staff.
- Ensure County IT infrastructure (people, tools, and processes) continues to be appropriate to support and advance organizational success.
- Continue to actively pursue state of good repair and best practice initiatives with respect to IT infrastructure.
- Safeguard the privacy and security of County data and information.

### **Champion a Vibrant Future**

- Continue to build strategic relationships and partnerships with local information technology experts, Eastern Ontario municipal partners via the Eastern Ontario Information Technology Collaborative (EOITC), and more to drive new forms of value and advantage for the County and community.
- Continue to support Ontario Health Team of Northumberland digital objectives.
- Continue to pursue collaborative opportunities using technology for the benefit of the County.